

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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*attached to ltr from Fred. C. Belen
to DCI dated 24 Oct. 1955 (ER-7-5281)
October 19, 1955*

STATEMENT BY HONORABLE JAMES C. DAVIS (D.,GA.), CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON MANPOWER UTILIZATION AND DEPARTMENTAL PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT, COMMITTEE ON POST OFFICE AND CIVIL SERVICE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMENTING ON THE ANNOUNCED REDUCTION OF TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.

I am pleased to learn that the Secretary of Defense is taking some aggressive action to bring about much needed reduction in total number of employees in the Defense establishment. His action is in line with my discussion with personal representatives of the heads of departments and agencies on September 22 and a letter I sent on October 12 to the Secretary of Defense and the heads of other departments and major agencies, pointing out that an immediate start must be made on a reduction of total number of employees.

My letter placed emphasis on the need for sharp curtailment of "new hirings" in the departments and agencies of the Government. This is the first step in bringing about most of the reduction in numbers of personnel by attrition.

I also note that the Secretary of Defense has stated that the reductions will be done on a selective basis. I take that to mean that the reductions will be made where they will have the least effect upon our national security. This is the very essence of our Committee program calling upon the departments and agencies to make a functional analysis and reduce employees engaged in activities that are least essential. It is the very heart of such a program.

Secretary Wilson's statement is particularly encouraging in the light of the expressed reluctance of some of the components of the Defense establishment in approaching our Committee's request for immediate action.

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The basis, of course, for all of this attempt at reduction in expenditures for civilian personnel (now amounting in excess of ten billion dollars a year) is to bring our budget sufficiently in balance so that we may consider a reduction in taxes.

I expect Secretary Wilson's action will be followed by similar actions by the heads of other departments and agencies.

A copy of my letter of October 12 to the Secretary of Defense and the heads of other departments and agencies is attached.